Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) is available as green fuel in Delhi and also at Mumbai and Baroda. Action for amendment in Motor Vehicles Act, LPG Control Order and Explosive Rules is under way to enable use of LPG in automobiles.

LPG Distribution in Rural Areas

1778. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "LPG Distributorship for Rural areas on anvil" which appeared in the Business Times Bureau on 15th July, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any decision has been taken to undertake awareness programme in the use of innovative methods and efficient equipments for conservation of petroleum products; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the people to the proposal and other relevant details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. With a view to areas, while formulating the LPG Plan 1996—98, it was distributorships in the following areas also:

(i) Wherever feasible, all towns with a population of 5,000 and above, including villages within 15 Kms. Radius, to make a viable distributorship.

(ii) Wherever feasible, all villages with a population of 10,000 and above, including the villages within 15 Kms. Radius, to make a viable distributorship.

(iii) Wherever feasible, rural areas within 15 KMs radius of towns with a population of one lakh and above.

Accordingly, a total of 1702 distributorships have been included in the approved LPG Marketing Plan for 1996—98. Of these, 401 are for only rural areas only. 1285 for urban/rural areas and 16 for urban areas.

Above distributorships are being advertised currently inviting applications from eligible candidates and selections are to be made by the Dealer Selection Boards on the basis of interview of eligible candidates, who will be responsible to set up distributorships, within specified period.

(c) and (d) Oil Industry is conducting several programmes including oil conservation week every year to create awareness among the masses about oil conservation. Under this programme the following activities are conducted to bring awareness in the use of innovative methods and efficient equipments for conservation of petroleum products:

(a) Seminars in Schools/Colleges
(b) Seminars with consumer associations
(c) Painting/Debate/Essay Competitions in School/Colleges
(d) Wide Spread messages through TV/Radio
(e) Display of Banners/Hoardings
(f) Distributions of safety/conservation Literature/Leaflets, etc.
(g) Participation in Kisan Melas and setting up demonstration centres in rural areas.

Customers/public have appreciated the efforts of the industry in organising various conservation activities in order to promote/propagate awareness and need for conservation of petroleum products.

Supply of Bitumen to Gujarat

1779. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM and NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the supply of bitumen to Gujarat is tied up with Koyali Refinery;

(b) whether the supply is as per their demand;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor, and

(d) the steps taken by Government to meet the demand in full?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir. Koyali Refinery is the main source of supply of Bitumen to Gujarat.

(b) and (c) Bitumen supplies to Gujarat are on ex-MI basis, i.e., the customer arranges the transportation and the oil companies are loading the trucks reporting at the supply point. Accordingly, the oil companies are making supplies as per the number of State Government trucks reporting for upliftment of Bitumen at the refinery.

(d) The oil companies have been advised to augment Bitumen supplies to the State of Gujarat subject to upliftment by the State through their nominated tank trucks.

Coal Bed Methane Exploration

1780. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM and NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status and future plans of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) exploration in West Bengal; and

(b) the action plan for petroleum exploration in Bengal basin?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Two blocks, viz. (i) Raniganj (Northern Part) & (ii) Ranigang (Eastern Part) in the Raniganj Coal field of West Bengal have been identified for Coal Bed Methane (CBM) Exploration and Exploitation and are proposed to be included in the first round of bidding for Coal Bed Methane (CBM) exploration & exploitation.

In addition to above ONGC has also acquired 80 GLK of 2D seismic data and drilled 2 R & D wells in Durgapur Depression.

(b) ONGC has appointed an expert to evaluate Bengal Basin. Expert recommended for additional seismic data acquisition and review and reinterpretation of existing data and also suggested for a 3 year drilling pause. These recommendations are at various stages of implementation.

After evaluation of the above results, further plan of exploration will be formulated.

Besides above, 3 blocks in Bengal offshore (including NEC) and 2 in Bengal onland basin have been identified for offer in the first round of NELP to be announced in the near future.

Demand of Gujarat Government for revision of Royalty on Petroleum Products

1781. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN:
SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had recently fixed the rates of royalty on crude oil on ad-hoc basis;

(b) whether the Government of Gujarat has submitted any memorandum for fixation of royalty on crude oil/natural gas to Government;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is a demand for revision of royalty for the years 1993-94 and 1995-96 and for fixation of royalty for 1996-97 and for the current financial year;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the decision taken by Government thereon and communicated to the Government of Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) For the period 1.4.1993 to 31.3.1996, an 'on